



Tundra Swan at Pea Island

Photo by Dan Chambers



The Piedmont Birder



**Greater Black-backed Gull
at Oregon Inlet**

Photo by Dan Chambers

THANKSGIVING AT THE OUTER BANKS

Dennis and Lynn Burnette again led a wonderful trip to the Outer Banks over the Thanksgiving weekend. The thirteen Club members, as a group, saw 101 species of birds, and various individuals saw twenty-three other species in separate encounters. We enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner together, at least twelve of us, and generally got together for great meals at other restaurants on other nights. The weather was pretty good, cool and breezy on Friday, but it warmed up somewhat the next two days and it didn't rain. There were quite a lot of birds - Tundra Swans, Pintails, Gadwalls, Widgeons, Brown and White Pelicans, loons, mergansers, egrets, herons, etc. at the Pea Island NWR. There were Redheads there as well as many other ducks. Our Best Bird that day was an American Bittern, which amazingly was standing right beside the road. It made a brief attempt to "hide" by stretching up its neck, a typical camouflaging posture in reeds or grasses, but quickly realized its folly and flew off.

We made stops at Oregon Inlet where we saw a Black Skimmer, Purple Sandpipers and Ruddy Turnstones.

LINVILLE ROAD MARSH 10/29/05

by Dennis Burnette

A great group of nineteen bird club members participated in the Linville Road Marsh Field Trip on Saturday, October 29. The marsh, which is in the community of Oak Ridge near the military academy in western Guilford County, is part of the headwaters of the Haw River. In past trips we have seen a lot of good birds there, and we weren't disappointed this time, either.

In less than two hours of birding from the road edge and bridge, we spotted thirty-one bird species. Highlights included eleven Wild Turkeys, a flock of Rusty Blackbirds, and such winter birds as Yellow-rumped Warbler and Swamp, Chipping, and White-throated Sparrows. Both kinglets made appearances.

From the marsh, we continued to a couple of additional sites where we added several more species to the trip list. Brookbank Road didn't produce the White-crowned Sparrows we had hoped for, but proved to be great for raptors; we had Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Kestrel, and both Turkey and Black Vultures.

It was a sunny but frosty and chilly autumn morning, a beautiful day for a bird outing. Because of the cool temperature, though, we were a bit surprised to see two species of butterflies, Clouded Sulphur and Sleepy Orange. Fortunately, there were still quite a few wildflowers in bloom for them, particularly aster-type flowers. At one stop we spotted some Alpacas on a farm, an unusual species for this part of the world even in captivity!

The trip concluded just after noon with a total of thirty-eight bird species for the morning. On the way back to Greensboro, several folks added Great Egret and Double-crested Cormorant as we crossed the lakes. What a great day!

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Piedmont Bird Club
PO Box 38833
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Committee Members: Diana Bowman, Dan Chambers, Emily Tyler, Melissa Whitmire

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The next deadline for newsletter items is Apr. 15, 2006.

Call Louise Brown at 685-5043 or e-mail at piedmontbirder@triad.rr.com.

Officers

- President: Bob Pellettier
- Vice President: Dan Chambers
- Recording Secretary: Carol Pellettier
- Corresponding Secretary: Peggy Ware
- Treasurer: Susan Weimer
- Members-at-Large: Lou Skrabec, Mary Woodrow

From the PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Bob Pelletier

As the 2005 calendar year wound down, the annual Holiday Dinner was our last meeting prior to 2006. The turnout exceeded recent years as forty members and guests were in attendance. Dennis Burnette, along with assistance from Lynn Moseley, organized a most interesting audio-visual program after dinner, with members presenting a variety of photographs of birding trips locally and around the country. The evening came to a close with the drawing for door prizes, many donated. A good time was had by all!

As we are presently halfway into the 2005/2006 PBC year, our membership continues to grow. We presently have 22 new members this year, with many indicating "I found your Club on the Web." I continue to emphasize, especially to new members, the wealth of information found on our Website, which includes local birding areas that have been researched by our PBC leaders, directions to the locations and what you may see to assist in identification. Upcoming field trips and PBC events are also posted and updated.

I would like to thank and acknowledge those individuals who have dedicated many hours of their time researching and developing information and maintaining and updating the Website, so all bird enthusiasts may benefit.

As we move into the second half of our fiscal year, you will find many interesting field trips being offered and informative speaker presentations at the monthly membership meetings. This information is also available in the 2005/2006 Yearbook as well as on the Website.



BOG GARDEN

Fifteen people, mostly PBC members with a couple of other folks, showed up at the Bog Garden Nov. 12. It was a beautiful day, sunny and cool in the morning but not uncomfortably so. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker greeted us as we entered the park from Starmount Forest Road. The most interesting birds seen were a late Catbird and a couple of Fish Crows. The crows are residents, according to those who frequent the Bog. It seems that this warm fall had slowed down the arrival of winter ducks, the only ones present at the time being a handful of Ring-necked Ducks and a couple of Pied-billed Grebes. However, the White-throated Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers were present in large numbers!

A few of us went to some of the lakes afterward. There were about twenty Ruddy Ducks and that many Ring-necks on Buffalo Lake, as well as a substantial flock of about thirty Coots. The best birds there were three Red-breasted Mergansers. They were females or immature males, hunkered down and resting together, identified by their bright orange bills.

We had lunch at Ham's Lakeside, and then dropped by Trosper Pond to see what was there. Not much, as the Buffleheads had yet to arrive. The only interesting bird was a Mute Swan, which technically does not count since it is introduced. Then we went to Lake Brandt Marina, not much there either, except for three Double-crested Cormorants and a single Ring-billed Gull resting on something on the far side of the water. In all, we saw forty-one species that day.

by Louise Brown



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Photo by Judith Pate

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

by Dan Chambers

The National Audubon Society and Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology want you to participate in the ninth annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), February 17-20, 2006. This is one of the easiest and most important Citizen Science projects to do. You can be actively involved in bird conservation.

All you need to do is count birds for a minimum of 15 minutes; however, 30 minutes is recommended. You can do this from inside your home while sipping your morning coffee in your pajamas. You can "count birds with a buddy" and bring a new person, young or old, into the birding world. It would be great fun to do with your children or grandchildren.

You can count in your yard for one day or each of the four days of the GBBC. You can visit a local park. Walk one of our many trails. Count at your church or your child's school. Count at your favorite birding spot or explore a new one. Pictures of your experience are welcomed.

Visit the GBBC Website at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

All that you need to know is on the website; however, if you need help, email me (Dan Chambers) at Instrctus@aol.com and I will be glad to assist you. Check the "**Results**" section from previous years to see reports from our community.

It is fun. It is important. Count on as many days as you can, at as many places as you can. Every bird enthusiast, that's you, needs to participate. Once again, the Great Backyard Bird Count is held February 17-20, 2006. Enjoy!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

We look forward to sharing our upcoming activities with these newest new members! Please add their names to your Yearbook. Unless otherwise noted, all cities are Greensboro, all states are North Carolina and all area codes are 336.

ROBINSON, Ed

TALLEY, Marlene

WHITFIELD, Valerie



ALAMANCE COUNTY FIELD TRIP

Saturday, December 3rd, Lynn Moseley led twelve PBC members to Cedarock Park and Lake Macintosh in Alamance County. They observed forty-six species of birds, including an immature Bald Eagle, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Hairy Woodpecker, both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Chipping Sparrow and Purple Finch.



Hairy Woodpecker
Photo by Charlie Campbell



Tireless Kestrel

Photo by Melissa Whitmire

WHITE STREET LANDFILL

Jan. 7, 2006

We had a great turnout at the White Street Landfill in Greensboro with twenty-three participants! Carolyn Allen made arrangements for us to be there, as it is not open for general public sightseeing. It was a lovely day at the dump; there were swarms of starlings, gulls, and rock pigeons especially. Of the hundreds of gulls, a few Herring Gulls and one Laughing Gull were spotted, all the rest were Ring-bills. A small pond near the entrance to the landfill had over a dozen ducks on it, Buffleheads and Ring-necks. A stately Great Blue Heron graced us with his appearance.

The landfill is actually quite extensive. It has many areas, some for dumping yard waste, some for construction debris, other areas for general garbage. There are parts that have been covered with dirt, parts that are currently in use, and areas presumably to be used later. We saw all the starlings, gulls and pigeons mainly at the active garbage area, where birds flocked to feast on the new piles of trash. Men on bulldozers are constantly pushing the fresh piles around, and eventually covering them with soil, so the flocks are in constant motion to mine the fresh garbage and to avoid the big machinery. It was a little chilly in the morning, and other flocks of birds were huddled on eastern slopes to soak up the sun.

In other areas of the landfill that were not active with debris or garbage, creeks, retention ponds and wooded areas provided habitat for many other species. Meadowlarks flew around on a hillside. Several species of sparrows, Swamp Song, White-throated and Savannah, were in the grasses of a swampy area. A persistent Kestrel (pictured above) hovered above a nearby hillside, showing off for us for about an hour. We saw a total of thirty-three species of birds there. There were massive numbers of individuals for some of those species!

by Louise Brown

PBC SHIRT SALES HIT RECORD HIGH

Many thanks to all who purchased PBC's 2005 Year of the Sandhill Crane shirt. Sales far exceeded expectations: 70 shirts raised \$285 for the Club. Thanks to publicity on our Website, there were 6 individuals from outside the club who ordered a total of 11 shirts. For comparison, our first shirt sale in 2003/2004 netted \$281 on the sale of 64 shirts, all purchased by club members. Profits will be used to support the Club's ever-increasing activities.

Jean Murdick

Robert E. McCoy Sr. 1915-2006

Bob McCoy, husband of Jean McCoy for 65 years, died in his sleep New Year's Eve night at age 90. He was the epitome of the ideal birder's spouse, accompanying Jean on numerous out-of-town trips with the Club as well as on some of her birding jaunts around the world. He regularly attended our picnics and the holiday dinners, including the most recent ones. Bob will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

The family requests that those who want to make a tribute to Bob's memory, send a donation to the Piedmont Land Conservancy, P.O. Box 4025, Greensboro, 27404.



Ring-necked Ducks

Photo © 2005 by Melissa Whitmire

COUNTRY PARK REPORT

by Cal Weimer

The following people came to the Country Park Bird Walk Saturday, December 10th: Cal and Susan Weimer, Beth Bursuck, Don Allemann (new member), and Rosemary Lancaster (non-member).

It was 28 degrees, calm and sunny when we left the parking lot and headed across the lower end of the lower lake. There were many birds around, feeding as the sun warmed the ground along the lake's edge. Birds were everywhere in the trees and bushes. It took us 15 or 20 minutes just to get to the other side of the lake and start around the trail there. We were nearly to the end of the lower lake trail when a hawk was spotted in a tree up the hill from us. It was puffed up in the cold air and looking straight down at us, but never flew off. We thought it was a Red Tail, but weren't sure so we went around and up the hill to try to get a better view of its backside. As we got near the top of the hill the hawk flew off and landed on a tree right in front of us, as if to say, "Here I am, take a good look!" We did, and confirmed it as a Red-tailed Hawk.

It had taken an hour and a half to get that far. Because of the increasing wind and cold, we decided not to go around the upper lake. We enjoyed great conversation and hot coffee at Cal's Tailgate coffee shop for a while before going our separate ways. Everyone had a good time.

The following is a list of birds that were identified: Junco, Chickadee, Titmouse, Goldfinch, Cardinal, Flicker, Carolina Wren, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Crow, Bluebird, Blue Jay, Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Coot, Mallard, Canada Geese, a variety of domestic ducks, and many sparrows, but they were never in good light to tell which kind.



© Melissa Whitmire 2005

EAGLE UPDATE

The pair of eagles has been sighted several times since December in the area of the nest, and has been seen in the nest itself (the same nest as they've used for the past two years). The birds seem to be on schedule for a successful breeding season.

-Lynn Moseley



Bald Eagle on Lake Brandt

Photo © by Melissa Whitmire

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Ocean sightings included hundreds of Northern Gannets, which dove headlong into the water offshore for fish.

On Sunday we went to Lake Mattamuskeet, where there also were lots of swans, ducks, herons, etc. We saw at least five Bald Eagles there, most of them immature. One bird that showed itself atypically was a Marsh Wren, which kept popping up in the grass and flying around for several minutes, the best look most of us had ever had of one.

Other folks spotted in various other places: Surf Scoters, Orange-crowned Warblers, Wilson's Snipe, Sedge Wrens, and many others! Too bad we had to go home!

by Louise Brown

CAMP GILROCK

Carolyn Allen led a Field trip to Camp Gilrock on November 19, 2005 for both the Pearson Audubon chapter and the Piedmont Bird Club. They observed thirty-four species of birds, which included Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawks, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwings, Dark-eyed Junco and Field Sparrows.



!! Attention Packrats !!

We are compiling a notebook of all the PBC newsletters since the first one in May 1989. If you have a set (or part of one) you would be willing to donate to the Club, please contact Emily Tyler at 375-5770.

Richard Carleton Ward 1916-2005

Carl Ward died December 2, 2005 at 89 years of age. He was active in the Club for many years, and may be remembered for the beef stroganoff he brought to PBC picnics in a military canteen. Carl was an activist and avid lover of nature. He was also known for being quite a character.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro, 2500 Summit Avenue, Greensboro, NC 27405, the National Wildlife Foundation, or the Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library, 1420 Price Park Road, Greensboro, 27410, designated for environmental studies.



Buffleheads on Trosper Pond

Photo © 2005 by
Melissa Whitmire

If you know anyone in the club who is sick or just under the weather, please contact Peggy Ware at 282-6553 or mjware@prodigy.net. She will send a card on behalf of the PBC.

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Thursday, March 16, 7:30 p.m.

MEETING: Cranes in Eastern North America. Walter Sturgeon is president of the Whooping Crane Conservation Association and an active participant in Operation Migration - the effort to lead Whooping Cranes from Wisconsin to Florida with ultralight aircraft. He will describe the result of this past autumn's work, and will also talk about Sandhill Cranes and their recent occurrences in North Carolina. *Bird of the Season:* Hooded Merganser

Saturday, March 18

Field Trip: We will visit the Whittacre's farm in the Bunch Rd. area of Guilford Co. for an easy walk to look for late winter birds. If time allows, we also may visit one of the lakes to look for waterfowl. Leaders: Carolyn and Don Allen. 288-3045, texallennnc@aol.com

Saturday, March 25

Field Trip: Waterfowl on the Greensboro Lakes, Part #2. Meet at 9:00 a.m. Ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers, and gulls are our target birds on this tour of the lake overlooks. Dress warmly and bring a thermos of something hot; the wind off the lakes can be chilling. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. No walking. Leader: Henry Link. 273-4672, linkh@bellsouth.net

Saturday, April 1

Spring Bird Walk: Guilford Courthouse National Military Park. Meet at Tour Stop #5 at 9:00 a.m. We will walk the woodland edge of the meadow-like Schenk's Field where we will look for early spring migrants in this 220-acre forested national park in the middle of the northern Greensboro suburbs. Leaders: TBA.

Saturday, April 8

Field Trip: Mason Farm and NC Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill. We will look for migratory birds, wildflowers, and butterflies at this nature preserve owned by the University of North Carolina. Bring money for lunch at a local restaurant. This will be a joint field trip with the TGP Audubon chapter. Leader: Dennis Burnette. 299-4342, DEBurnette@triad.rr.com

Friday - Sunday, April 14-16 (Easter Weekend)

Field Trip: Huntington Beach State Park and the Myrtle Beach, SC area. This is one of our club's favorite out of town trips. We will look for migrating birds at several spots in Horry and Georgetown counties over this

-Calendar, Con't next column

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three-day weekend. Participants often stay at the nearby Brookwood Inn or Litchfield Inn where we will meet Friday morning to go birding. Contact the leaders for other lodging suggestions and trip details. Leaders: Dennis & Lynn Burnette. 299-4342, LBurnette1@triad.rr.com, DEBurnette@triad.rr.com

April 15 through May 15

Migrating Spring Bird Watch: Henry Link will be monitoring the migration of warblers and other birds at Starmount Forest/Hamilton Lakes Park nearly every morning between April 15 and May 15 starting at the intersection of Nutbush Rd. and Starmount Dr. at about 7:30 a.m. Members are invited to join him, but be sure to call him the night before to confirm. 273-4672, linkh@bellsouth.net

Thursday, April 20

MEETING: The Evolution of Birds. Dr. Julia Clarke, NCSU Assistant Professor of Marine, Earth, and Atmospheric Sciences, is an expert on vertebrate paleontology, and studies the evolution of birds from a theropod dinosaur ancestor. Recent discoveries of "feathered dinosaurs" in China have continued to fuel the debate regarding which group of ancient reptiles was ancestral to birds. Dr. Clarke will discuss current theories of bird evolution.

Bird of the Season: Wood Duck

Saturday, April 22 (Earth Day)

Field Trip: The Summit Conference Center. We will walk the wooded trails down to the lake and then along the boardwalk to the Haw River, which is a small stream at this site. Contact the trip leader for directions. Leader: Emily Tyler. 375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com

Friday, April 28 - Sunday, April 30

Carolina Bird Club Spring Meeting, Asheville, NC. Join birders from both Carolinas for evening programs and day trips. See their Website for complete information:

<http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/>

Saturday, April 29

Field Trip: Randolph Co. for migrants and breeding birds. We will travel about 45 minutes south of Greensboro to the rural Randolph Co. home of member Jane Lewis to explore the forests and fields. Leaders: Jane & Mark Lewis. 381-1696, jane_lewis@vfc.com

-Calendar, Con't next column

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It's not too early to renew your membership for the June 2006-May 2007 year. If you have any questions, call Treasurer Susan Weimer at 288-2160 or e-mail her at: sweimer@triad.rr.com. Use the application form to the right.

-Calendar, cont' from last column

Saturday, May 6

Spring Bird Count. Novices are welcome for all or part of the day to count within the designated 15-mile circle. Birding is mostly by car and short hikes. The tally is the next day at 2 p.m. at St. Andrews Episcopal Church. Compiler: Herb Hendrickson; Assignments Coordinator: Elizabeth Link. 273-4672, baddogi@yahoo.com



1589-134 Skeet Club Road
High Point, NC 27265
841-2572

433 Pisgah Church Road
Greensboro, NC 27455
282-4458

PBC members get a 10% discount on all regularly priced items in the store- mention your membership **BEFORE** you make a purchase!

Members Tom and Liz Schmid have just opened the High Point store, we wish them well on their new venture!

PIEDMONT BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Date _____
Name(s) _____
Telephone _____
Address _____

E-mail _____
Individual ___ Family ___
New ___ Renewal _____

Note: One year's dues are payable from June through May, \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families.

Mail Payment to: PBC, Box 38833, Greensboro, 27438-8833

Calendar

Reminder: If you are interested in going on a field trip, always contact the Leader prior to the trip. That way you will be informed of last minute changes, or cancellations, or the Leader may need to modify plans according to the number of attendees.



SPECIAL NOTE: The programs for the February and April club meetings have been switched from the original schedule in the Yearbook.



FEBRUARY

Thursday, February 2 – Sunday, February 5

Carolina Bird Club Winter Meeting, Virginia Beach, VA. Join birders from both Carolinas for evening programs and day trips. See their Website for complete information: <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/>

Saturday, February 11

Field Trip: Waterfowl on the Greensboro Lakes, Part #1. Meet at 9:00 a.m. Ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers, and gulls are our target birds on this tour of the lake overlooks. Dress warmly and bring a thermos of something hot; the wind off the lakes can be chilling. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. No walking. This is a joint field trip with T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon. Leader: Henry Link. 273-4672, linkh@bellsouth.net

Thursday, February 16, 7:30 p.m.

MEETING: Endemic Birds of the Galapagos Islands, Lynn Moseley, Ph.D. Lynn, a professor of Biology at Guilford College, will describe the unique bird fauna of the Galapagos Islands, and explain the reasons for the evolution of these fascinating birds in this magical land. *Bird of the Season:* Ruddy Duck

Saturday, February 25

Winter Bird Walk: Guilford Courthouse National Military Park. Meet at Tour Stop #5 at 9:00 a.m. We will explore the meadow-like Schenk's Field and the surrounding woodlands in this 220-acre forested national park in the middle of the northern Greensboro suburbs. Leader: TBA.

Saturday, March 4

Field Trip: A&T Farm. Meet at the Farm at 8:30. Easy hike around a farm pond and along the edge of wet woodland. Always a good trip, this is our best site for Wilson's Snipe. Wear water-resistant shoes, dress in layers. Leader: Emily Tyler. 375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com

Saturday, March 11

Adopt-a-Park: Members will help pick up trash and check nest boxes at Greensboro Country Park. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot that can be reached by turning onto Orman Road from Lawndale, and then turning left at the intersection. (Rain date March 12 at 2:30 p.m.) Leader: Cal Weimer. 288-2160

-see *Calendar. con't on p. 5*



Piedmont Bird Club

PO Box 38833

Greensboro, NC 27438-8833